

# Are Ye Not Carnal?

1 Cor 3:1-4

Two types of wisdom: world's, God's

Two types of man: natural, spiritual.

3 types of believer:

1. Spiritual
2. Carnal – characterized by flesh
3. Carnal – controlled by flesh.

5 years previous Paul came to Corinth.

Lived there 18 months

Succeeded by Apollos. Acts 18:24-25

**1 Corinthians 3:1** Paul had to approach them as immature Christians.

Church in Corinth a new church.

Many from Palestine and disciples under Peter . 1 Corinthians 1:12

**Spiritual:** *pneumatikos*, controlled by Spirit of God/ walking according to Word of God.

**Carnal:** *sarkinos*, characterized by flesh, OSN

**Carnal**, verse 3 .... *Sarkikos*, controlled by flesh.

When person receives Christ -- given new nature.

*Mac: From that point, until the Lord takes him to be with Himself, he is swimming upstream. Like a Salmon returning to spawn, he discovers that gravity and the current are continually against him. His new heart drives him in an entirely different direction from that of the world around him.*

3 major obstacles: World, Flesh, Devil.

**World:** philosophy going in different direction from Word of God.

**Flesh:** inherited at birth.

Sinful nature inherited from Adam.

When receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior --given new nature

**Devil:** supernatural attack by Satan or demons. We'll discuss this in more detail at a different time.

I had to treat you as characterized by flesh – old sin nature.

Approach you like babies in Lord.

**Carnal:** *sarkinos*, characterized by flesh. Newly saved believers.

Paul couldn't approach same way as Christians--spiritually mature.

They could only handle milk

*Marten: Their capacity for spiritual truth was very limited.*

## 1 Corinthians 3:2

How spot maturity level of Christian?

1. Diet
2. Practice
3. Attitude

1 Peter 2:2 Matthew 4:4 Hebrews 5:11-14

### 1. Diet.

Baby believer only able to digest milk

Wiersbe: *It is not difficult to determine a believer's spiritual maturity or immaturity if you discover what kind of diet he enjoys. The immature believer knows the facts about our Lord's life and ministry on earth, but not the truths about His present ministry in heaven. He lives on "Bible stories" and not Bible doctrines. He has no understanding of "the deeper things of God (1 Cor 2:6-7)"*

*When Paul first came to Corinth he taught the whole counsel of God but noticed that they often choked on the Word. They weren't able to digest it. Now 5 years later they were still choking on it.*

***neither yet now are ye able.*** Still choking on steak of Word.

Mac: *Like many Christians today, the Corinthians seemed quite content to stay on milk. Some congregations do not want the pastor to get "too deep." Their fleshly habits are not much threatened if, for instance, the preacher sticks primarily to evangelistic messages. Evangelism is the cutting edge of the church's mission, but it is for unbelievers, not believers. Or the congregation wants Scripture to be preached so superficially that their sin is not exposed, much less rebuked and corrected...There is no difference at all between the truths of a spiritual milk diet and a spiritual solid food diet, except in detail and depth...*

### 2. Practice

Hebrews 5:11-14 ...13 <sup>13</sup>*For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 ...by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

Spiritual growth seen in Christian's life by use of Word.

Conversation. Matthew 4:4

Affections: Psalm 119:97 Colossians 3:2

Focus/goals: Matthew 6:33

Actions /Lifestyle Psalm 119:105, 133 Matthew 5:16

## 1 Corinthians 3:3

***Carnal:*** *sarkikos*...controlled by flesh.

Possibly saved for years.

Under influence and control of flesh  
Fleshly by choice.

### **3. Attitude.**

Envy, strife, divisions.

Self-centered

*Mac: One of the worst and most disappointing problems the church can have is a congregation full of baby Christians who are not growing because they seek to fulfill fleshly appetites. Because self-centeredness is at the heart of fleshly behavior, envy and strife are always found in an immature congregation. Envy is the attitude and strife is the action that results from it. One is the inner emotional condition, the other the outward expression of selfishness.*

*Envy:* feeling of discontent and ill will because of another's advantages,

*Strife:* conflict, fighting, quarrelling, competition.

*Divisions:* separating into groups; standing apart.

### **1 Corinthians 3:4**

*Paul:* 1<sup>st</sup> pastor; started church.

*Apollos:* 2<sup>nd</sup> pastor; sent by Paul

Different styles of preaching

Different personalities.

Different spiritual gifts

*Mac: Fleshly, immature people cooperate only with those leaders and fellow believers with whom they happen to agree or who personally appeal to them or will flatter them....When a congregation develops loyalties around individuals, it is a sure symptom of spiritual immaturity and trouble.*

*Gromaki: Carnality is expressed by following or exalting one Christian leader at the expense of others.*

One of most important things that can happen to local church--strong loyalty to body.

# So What?

Which category?

*Spiritual*: controlled by Spirit.

*Carnal*: characterized by Flesh

*Carnal*: controlled by Flesh

Diet: Milk or Meat ?

Practice: Using Word?

Attitude:

*Envy*: desire for advantage, quality, etc. that another has.

*Strife*: conflict, fighting, quarrelling, competition.

*Divisions*: separating into